My dear Dilke,

Shanklin Saturday Evng

I will not make my diligence an excuse for not writing to you sooner - because I consider idleness a much better plea. A Man in the hurry of business of any sort is expected and ought to be expected to look to every thing - his mind is in a whirl, and what matter it - what whirl? But to receive a Letter of a Man lost in idleness is the utmost cruelty, you cut the thread of his existence, you beat, you pummel him, you sell his goods and chattels, you put him in prison, you impale him; you crucify him - If I had not put pen to paper since I saw you this would be to me a most amusing taking up before the Judge: but having got over my dashing Countenance habits a little, it is with scarcely any pain I come to this dating from Shanklin and D^r Dilke The Isle of Wight is but so so to. Rice and I passed rather a dull time of it. I hope he will not repent coming with me. He was unwell and I was not in very good health: and I am afraid we made each other worse by acting upon each others spirits. We would grow as melancholy as need be. I confess I cannot bear a sick person in a House especially alone - it weighs upon me day and night - and more so when perhaps the Case is irremediable - Indeed I think Rice is in a dangerous

state. I have had a Letter from him which speaks favourably of his health at present - Brown and I are pretty well despaired again to our dog-cart. I mean the Tragedy which goes on sustenedly - We are thinking of who drowned an Elephant but have not historical utterance written enough to determine us as to Otho's Menagerie. When Brown first mentioned this I took it for a Joke; however he brings such plausible reasons, and dis courses so eloquently on the dramatic effect that I am giving it a serious consideration. The Art of Poetry is not sufficient for us, and if we get on in that as well as we do in painting we shall by next winter crush the Remens and the royal Academy - Indeed if Brown would take a little of my advice he could not fail to be first pallet of his day. But odd as it may appear, he says plainly that he cannot see any force in my plea for putting skies in the back ground - and leaving indian ink out of an ash tree - The other day he was sketching Shandlin Church and as I saw how the business was going on, I challenged him to a trial of Skill - he took me Pencil and Paper - we kept the Sketches to contend for the Prize at the Gallery - I will not say whose I think best - but really I do not think Brown's done to the top of the Hat - a word or two on the Isle of Wight - I have been no further than Steephill - If I may guess I should that there is no finer part in the Island

than from this Place to Sheffield - I do not hesitate to say it is fine - Boneluncle is the best. But I have been so many finer walks, with a back ground of lake and mountain instead of the sea, that I am not much touched with it, though I credit it for all the Scapine I should have felt if it had taken my cock. my maidenhead - But I may call myself an old Placer in the picturesque, and unless it be something very large and overpowering I cannot receive any extraordinary relish. I am sorry to hear that Charles is so much oppress'd at Westminster: though I am sure it will be the finest touch stone for his Metal in the world - His troubles will grow day by day less, as his age and strength increase. [illegible] Battle he wins will lift him from the [illegible] I do not know how I should feel were a Father but I hope I should strive with all my power not to let the present trouble me - When you [illegible] he will have [illegible] about his children [illegible] he will have no more memory of [illegible] than you have of yours - Brown tells me Mrs [illegible] sets off to day for Chichester - I am glad - I was going to say she had a fine day - but there has been a great thunder cloud muttering over Hampshire all day - I hope she is now at supper with a good appetite - So Reynolds's Piece succeeds - that is all well.

by the delicate lac ne mils of the virgin I will not open your Letters. If they are as Dilke says "suspicious looking letters" I must open them. If St. John had been half as cunning he might have seen the revelations comfortably in his own room, without giving angels the trouble of breaking open seals. Remember me to Mrs D.- and the Westminsterianus and believe me Ever your sincere friend John Keats-

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business for George; the other from this place since my return. I cant make it out. I am expressely sorry for it. I shall hear from Brown and from you almost together for I have sent him a Letter to day: you must positively agree with me or